Disrupting the Spiritual Direction Industry

boydcamak.wordpress.com/2025/10/13/disrupting-the-spiritual-direction-industry

Boyd Camak, hypocrite with logs in my eyes. (Matthew 7:3-5) Admiring the counterintuitive way. (1 Corinthians 1:18-25)

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Fellowship of the Cross: A Free Model of Shared Suffering and Resurrection

Disclaimer
This isn't therapy, counseling, or professional spiritual direction.
It's a free, peer-based experiment in truth-telling and prayer.
If you need mental health or medical help, please reach out to a licensed professional.
Nothing here replaces that.
This is simply a way for ordinary people to walk through suffering together in the light of Christ.
No money. No credentials. No gurus. Ever.

The Industry No One Calls an Industry

While traditional spiritual direction has ancient roots in Christian contemplative practice, it has evolved into an **industry**—a professionalized field with:

- Certification programs costing thousands
- Standard session rates ($50–150)
- Professional associations and conferences
- Books, curricula, and training materials for sale
- Economic barriers excluding the poor, the burned-out, and the geographically isolated

Selling spiritual guidance is like charging a toll when someone asks for directions—or demanding money to read a road sign.
But the goal here isn't reform. It's replacement—to make the current system obsolete.

From Individual Direction to Community of Witness

Traditional Spiritual Direction	Community of Witness (Fellowship of the Cross)
One trained director meets 1-on-1 with directee	Small groups (3–7 peers)
Focus: Discerning God's movement in your life	Focus: "Where are you being crucified right now?"
Method: Listening, asking questions, suggesting practices	Method: Mutual confession, corporate witness, attachment practice (see appendix for scriptural basis)
Cost: $50–150/session	Cost: Free by design (monetization = betrayal)
Access: Need to find trained director (rare outside cities)	Access: Anyone desperate enough can start one

This isn't about technique refinement. It's about **communal truth-telling** that exposes both systemic sin and personal complicity.

The Core Practice: Attachment

Instead of asking, *"What is God calling you to do?"* the core question becomes:
"Where are you being crucified right now—and how can that suffering be attached to Christ's crucifixion?"

The practice is concrete, not abstract:

1. **Name the suffering:** "I'm unemployed and ashamed."
2. **Find a parallel in Christ's life:** "Joseph fleeing to Egypt, needing work."
3. **Attach concretely:** While praying (rosary, Jesus Prayer, or any practice), say:
   "My unemployment is joined to Joseph's exile."
4. **Notice what happens:** Does peace come? Does fear loosen? That's the test.

This is a lived theology of **co-crucifixion and co-resurrection**—an embodied participation in the suffering and freedom of Christ.

Beyond Tribal Boundaries

This model refuses to belong to any single religious camp.

It is **not**:

- Catholic spiritual direction
- Protestant accountability
- Orthodox prayer circle

It **is**:

“Seekers digging together for the living root beneath all camps.”

Everyone is welcome. **For example**:

- Ex-evangelicals burned by purity culture
- Ex-Catholics wounded by abuse scandals
- Never-churched spiritual seekers
- Buddhists curious about Christ

The only requirement: a **willingness to dig for truth**, wherever it leads.

The Prophetic Critique

This disruption isn’t just structural—it’s theological.
Christ taught a way of living that **embraces suffering and leads to internal freedom**—including freedom from unjust or corrupt religious authority.

The treasures of Christian spirituality belong to everyone.
You shouldn’t need a theology degree, a credential, or a thousand-dollar certificate to access them.

Christ was crucified naked—utterly open. The teachings born from that act should be just as open.

The Practical Model: Community of Witness (Fellowship of the Cross)

Format (90 minutes, weekly or biweekly):

1. **Opening (10 min)** — Silence, simple prayer, brief reading (for entry, not study)
2. **Witness Round (40 min)** — Each person shares: “Here’s where I was crucified this week.”
    - No fixing or advice
    - Others listen and ask clarifying questions only
3. **Attachment Practice (20 min)** — “Where is Christ in these stories?”
    - Help each other attach suffering to moments in Christ’s life
    - Ask: Does peace come when this connection is named?
4. **Discernment (15 min)** — What is the Spirit prompting?
    - Not: “You should…”
    - But: “I wonder if…”
5. **Closing (5 min)** — One takeaway, brief prayer

Ground Rules:

- Confidentiality (except for abuse or danger)
- No fixing—we witness, not solve

- No spiritual one-upmanship
- No monetization ever
- Rotate facilitation—no permanent leader
- Right to pass
- Conflict is sacred—don't smooth it over

The Objections

"This is just therapy."
Therapy aims at coping. This aims at **transformation through co-crucifixion.**
Therapist: "How do you feel about that?"
Community of Witness: "Where is Christ being crucified in you right now?"

"People need trained guides."
The church has done enough damage with "trained guides."
Safeguards here are communal: small groups, rotating leadership, no hierarchy, and freedom to leave.

"Isn't this just what church is supposed to be?"
Exactly. This is what *church was* before it became:

- Performance venue (celebrity pastors)
- Ideological tribe (us vs. them)
- Self-help seminar (7 steps to a blessed life)
- Political caucus (Christian nationalism)

Why Now?

Three converging crises make this urgent:

- **Institutional Church Collapse** — people leaving in droves, hunger for authenticity remains
- **Mental Health Crisis** — therapy helps but can't address the spiritual dimension
- **Meaning Crisis** — secular materialism is hollow, New Age trends feel vapid

This model is:

- Post-institutional but not anti-tradition
- Therapeutic without being therapy
- Mystical without being escapist

The Vision (Not a Brand)

Christ's kingdom is **not a product to be marketed or a territory to be conquered.** (cf. Matthew 11:12)
It reveals itself through surrender, not platform-building.

Imagine thousands of small groups worldwide:

- Meeting in living rooms, coffee shops, parks
- Telling the truth about wounds and complicity
- Helping each other attach suffering to Christ's suffering
- Becoming quiet lights in their contexts

No empire. No brand. No monetization.
Just: **"Come and take it."**

The treasure shouldn't be locked in libraries.
The fellowship shouldn't cost $100/hour.
The Gospel shouldn't require a credential to access.

How to Start

1. Identify 2–3 people you trust who are **tired of performance Christianity.**
2. Ask: "Want to meet weekly to tell the truth about our lives and pray?"
3. **First meeting:** Share this vision, discuss fears, agree on ground rules.
4. **Second meeting:** Try the format. Adjust as needed.
5. **After 3 months:** Evaluate—Is peace increasing? Are patterns emerging? Is Christ more real?

No permission needed.
No certification required.
No fees collected.

About this post
This writing and model are free to use, share, or adapt—just not to sell.
No copyright games. No certifications. No paywalls.
If something here helps you or your community, take it and run with it.
The Gospel is free. So this stays free.

Appendix: Scriptural Basis for Shared Suffering

These passages ground the practice of "attaching" our sufferings to Christ's in Scripture.
They form the theological spine for the idea of co-crucifixion, co-resurrection, and redemptive participation in His life.

1. Colossians 1:24
“I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church.”

Paul’s suffering extends the love of Christ through time—his affliction becomes participation, not addition.

2. Romans 8:17
“If we suffer with him, we shall also be glorified with him.”

Suffering is not detour but doorway: the path of Christ repeated in His followers.

3. Philippians 3:10
“That I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.”

To “know” Christ means experiential union—living His death and resurrection in our own story.

4. 2 Corinthians 1:5
“For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ.”

Pain and consolation are not opposites but two streams from the same source.

5. Galatians 2:20
“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.”

The self that clings to control dies; the indwelling Christ takes its place.

6. Romans 12:1
“I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.”

Every act of endurance becomes liturgy. Suffering itself can be a form of worship.

7. 2 Corinthians 4:10–12
“We always carry about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For while we live we are always being given up to death for Jesus’ sake, so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh.”

Death and resurrection are simultaneous realities—death in us, life to others.

> **8. 1 Peter 4:12–13**
> *“Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal which comes upon you to test you, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but rejoice inasmuch as you share the sufferings of Christ, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.”*
>
> The “fire” isn’t a sign of failure but of fellowship with Christ.

> **9. John 12:24–25**
> *“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.”*
>
> Death in Christ’s pattern is fertile—what dies in love rises multiplied.

> **10. 2 Timothy 2:11–12**
> *“The saying is sure: If we have died with him, we shall also live with him; if we endure, we shall also reign with him.”*
>
> Endurance and resurrection are one continuous movement.

> **11. Isaiah 53:4–5**
> *“Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed.”*
>
> The pattern begins here: the Suffering Servant who absorbs pain to heal others—every later act of co-suffering flows from this.

Summary

Together, these passages form a theology of redemptive participation:
We suffer *with* Christ, not instead of Him; our wounds become altars of encounter, our endurance a witness of resurrection life.
This is the heartbeat of the “attachment” practice and the spiritual DNA of Community of Witness (Fellowship of the Cross) Teams.

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